
NEWS RELEASE



**MICHAEL R. STILES
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
615 Chestnut Street, Suite 1250
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

**Nursing Home Owner and Operator
Agree to Pay Government \$600,000
For Inadequate Care and Nutrition**

(News Release Begins on Next Page)

**CASE ASSIGNED TO:
Asst. U.S. Atty. David R. Hoffman**

**FOR RELEASE
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CONTACT: FRED HAMILTON, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER - (215) 451-5636

PHILADELPHIA --- The owner of a Philadelphia nursing home and the management company that ran it have agreed to pay the federal government \$600,000 to settle claims brought by an investigation into the quality of care provided residents between January 1993 and March 1994.

Michael R. Stiles, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, announced the settlement today (Feb. 21, 1996) involving the Tucker House Nursing Home, 1001 Wallace St., Philadelphia. The facility is owned by Tucker House II, Inc., which agreed to pay \$25,000 to the government.

Geriatric and Medical Companies, Inc., (Geri-Med) on behalf of its subsidiary, GMS Management-Tucker, Inc., the former manager of Tucker House, agreed to pay \$575,000. Additionally, Geri-Med agreed to a consent order that requires a strict corporate compliance program aimed at insuring adequate care for patients. A second consent order requires Tucker House II, Inc., to implement a nutrition monitoring and quality assurance program.

In its complaint against Tucker House, the government charged that three residents' nutritional and wound care needs were not adequately met and the continued billing for these services to the Medicaid and Medicare programs constituted false claims to the government.

The government charged that the residents became nutritionally at risk and suffered clinical complications as a result of poor nutrition.

Stiles said that the Tucker House case is "the first false claims act case in the country that specifically addresses the quality of nutrition and wound care provided to nursing home residents.

"I am confident," he added, "that this case will serve notice to the nursing home industry that failure to provide adequate care to the most frail individuals of our society will not be tolerated.

"At a minimum, residents of nursing homes should receive adequate nutrition. We will continue to monitor these situations to ensure that public funds expended on behalf of nursing home residents result in appropriate care being provided to them."

The consent order entered into by Geri-Med provides the following requirements for all of its 18 nursing homes:

- * A corporate compliance program that ensures appropriate response to weight loss and addresses the nutritional needs of all residents.

- * Provision of wound care in accordance with the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) guidelines.

- Training of staff responsible for providing nutrition policies and procedures, wound care, and corporate compliance program.

- Monthly reports of nutritionally at risk or compromised residents to be provided to the U.S. Attorney's Office upon request.

The consent order also provides for the review and analysis of nutrition and wound care provided at seven Geri-Med facilities by the University of Pennsylvania's Institute on Aging, with reporting to the U.S. Attorney's Office of all findings.

The Institute on Aging will analyze the nutritional services and wound care management at the various nursing homes, some of which are located in Philadelphia, and will evaluate and refine a nutritional risk assessment tool in order to identify those residents who are at risk of clinical complication from nutritional decline.

The government and Geri-Med agreed that innovative approaches and experimentation are needed to improve the nutritional health of nursing home residents and have attempted to facilitate such approaches including the strengthening of an interdisciplinary response to nutrition issues.

The consent order entered into by Tucker House Nursing Home requires the following:

- Implementation of a nutritional monitoring and quality assessment program.

- Provision of wound care in accordance with the AHCPR guidelines.

- Training of all Tucker House Nursing Home staff on the nutrition and wound care requirements.

- The U.S. Attorney's Office will monitor compliance with the consent order, and the facility is required to report to the government on all nutritionally compromised or at risk residents for a period of at least one year.

The case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney David R. Hoffman.